

# Stronger Together: A Creative Communities Club Curriculum

## Acknowledgment Section:

A heartfelt appreciation goes out to our local hero, Albert Maxey Sr., whose unwavering support, facilitation, artistic flair, and generous spirit have played a pivotal role in the success of this club and curriculum. We extend our gratitude to the Malone Center for their collaboration, providing a space for our youth to explore and nurture their creative talents, with special thanks to Christian Clinton and Karla Brown for their support. We also wish to recognize and thank Dr. Robert Briwa for his instrumental role in refining and packaging this curriculum, making it accessible for all who seek to delve into the foundational principles of ABCD practices. Thank you all for contributing to the enrichment of our community!

## Curriculum Introduction:

Sustainable community development and problem-solving efforts rely on cultivating the internal assets of local places and neighborhoods as resources to achieve positive community change. Assets—more accessibly known as strengths—include (but are not limited to) the skills of community members; the local history and culture of a neighborhood; and the physical infrastructure and space of a community. Examples of these strengths can be found in any neighborhood. However, they often go unidentified within a community, and may therefore be underused in community development. One way to cultivate the use of community strengths is to develop an awareness of [Asset Based Community Development approaches and values](#). [ABCD values](#) honor the existing assets, gifts, and resources within local neighborhoods by encouraging individuals, associations, and institutions to identify, unite, share, and cultivate their own strengths.

In what follows, we offer an eight-lesson, scaffolded curriculum grounded in ABCD practices and values. It is designed to introduce participants to core foci of ABCD practices and values, such as the concept of strength and its identification at individual and community scales; an awareness of local, neighborhood-scale history and culture as a particular form of community strength; and recognition of the untapped potential of physical infrastructure and space in a neighborhood. Through facilitated lessons, participants gain an understanding of the conceptual cornerstones of ABCD practices. They then apply their understanding of concepts in a series of directed walking tours of their local neighborhood which are designed to raise awareness about the neighborhood's unique history and culture. Finally, participants use various forms of creative expression in tandem with collaborative discussion and work to produce and implement a neighborhood-based art project, paired with a group celebration of their achievement. Ultimately, the lessons enable participants to make positive changes in their neighborhood and demonstrate to themselves and others how empowered community members are assets for the communities within which they live.

Note our use of these lessons occurred within the context of the Malone neighborhood of Lincoln, NE, where we carried out the program with primary school-aged children attending after-school programs at a local community center. Consequently, many of our lesson's examples are grounded in specific Malone places, spaces, and strengths. Furthermore, the lessons described here are designed for younger audiences. However, the curriculum's underlying theory, values, procedures, and learning outcomes may be transferred to other, non-Malone community contexts and varying and/or mixed participant age groups. Therefore, this curriculum is of use to those involved in after-school programming and ABCD instructors. It may also be adapted to the needs of other community groups and associations involved in community revitalization efforts. We intend to offer guidelines that may be used to promote the identification, exploration, and application of individual and community strengths in achieving meaningful community change in a variety of contexts.

### **Curriculum Learning Objectives:**

Participants in this curriculum achieve several, overlapping learning objectives that are thematically linked to the ABCD values identified below. Upon completion of this curriculum, participants will:

- Learn about the concept of individual assets, gifts, strengths, and talents.
- Practice various forms of expression to share their strengths with peers and the wider community.
- Utilize the five senses as a guide to reflect on their observations and experiences of the local neighborhood to its unique features, strengths, and resources.
- Use photography and other media to explore the local community and capture the essence of the neighborhood.
- Create visions for the local neighborhood and community through creative expression and share this vision with others.
- Collaborate as a group in forming a collective vision for a neighborhood-based art project.
- Celebrate the achievements and progress of the group.

### **ABCD Values addressed in the curriculum:**

- **Focus on ASSETS & STRENGTHS**
- **INVESTMENT orientation**
- **Emphasis on ASSOCIATIONS**
- **Focus on COMMUNITY**
- **Goal is EMPOWERMENT**

- **Power comes from RELATIONSHIPS**
- **PEOPLE are the answer**
- **People are RESIDENTS & MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY**

To achieve these values within the curriculum, facilitators should develop and implement pedagogical interventions (or techniques) that reflect and incorporate the ABCD practices identified in Figure 1, below. In our curriculum, we identify specific types and instances of activities that reflect ABCD practices. For example, in Lesson One, we develop a series of ice-breaker activities that are designed to simultaneously a) include and welcome participants; b) cultivate a community that shares and shifts power; and c) cultivate mutual respect. Note, however, that all our curriculum design reflects a constellation of these practices to greater or lesser degrees—and in adapting our curriculum to place- and community-specific needs in other settings, facilitators should feel free to develop their own ABCD practices.



**Figure 1: ABCD Practices**

Facilitators wishing to learn more about the underlying ABCD values, frameworks, and practices used within this curriculum may refer to the following free-to-access online resources:

**Link to ABCD website:** <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>

**Link to ABCD Worksheets:** [ABCD Training Handouts.pdf](#)

Facilitators wishing to learn more about how facilitation differs from traditional pedagogy/teaching, as well as the underlying theory and practice of facilitation, may refer to the following free-to-access compendium on facilitation: [Compendium of Methods and Tools for ABCD Facilitation](#)

## Lesson Plan 1: Exploring Individual Strengths

**Lesson 1 Objective:** Participants will learn about the concept of individual strengths, gifts, skills, and talents, with a particular focus on identifying the strengths, gifts, skills, and talents belonging to themselves and their peers.

### Description of Lesson:

This tripartite lesson lays the conceptual foundations for subsequent lessons within our curriculum. Part 1 consists of an icebreaker activity, group introductions, and the establishment of group agreements created by the participants which will guide their subsequent conduct in the curriculum. Through these introductory activities, participants are encouraged to adopt and co-create a learning space defined by the ABCD values of inclusivity and mutuality. In Part 2, participants are introduced to core concepts in ABCD frameworks, including strengths, gifts, and skills. Specifically, they engage with these concepts through the Head, Hands, and Heart model, which allows participants to identify personal knowledge strengths (Head), the skills they possess that they may teach to others (Hands), and personal values that stir participants to action (Heart). In Part 3, participants identify how the Head, Hands, and Heart metaphor applies to themselves by creating artwork or other forms of creative expression. To promote individual connections and community conversations, participants then share their creations with partners and the collective group.

### Time Allotment:

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

### Materials:

Prior to the lesson, facilitators should assemble the following materials:

- Miscellaneous art supplies for each participant. At a minimum, each participant should receive graphite pencils, a pencil sharpener, an eraser, a set of colored pencils, a marker set, and an individual drawing pad, a storage bag or case for these materials, and a folder.
- Scrap paper.
- A whiteboard and dry-erase markers.
- Chairs sufficient for the total number of participants.
- Tables sufficient for the total number of participants.

In addition to the materials offered above, facilitators may wish to acquire the following optional materials:

- Adhesive name tags.

### **Lesson Sequence:**

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 1. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

### **Facilitator Preparation:**

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator needs to take the following procedures:

- Assemble art supply kits for each participant.

Each kit should contain the art supplies listed above. Participants should view these kits as their own, and the facilitator should communicate that the kits will be used in many subsequent lessons. Therefore, participants are free to take them home between each lesson, or the facilitator may choose to store them for participant use between each lesson. At the conclusion of the curriculum, these kits belong to the participants.

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

- Arrange the whiteboard so it is visible to all participants.

The whiteboard will serve many functions throughout the lesson. It can offer space for brainstorming and communicating group ideas; it can offer guidelines for the lesson; or it can be a space where complex concepts and ABCD values are recorded. Facilitators may wish to prepare the whiteboard with the lesson's outline, or a full listing of the bulleted ABCD values described in the introduction. Alternately, it is a place where facilitators may identify and define the following concepts which will be discussed throughout the lesson:

**strength:** elements or characteristics that help or enable a person or group to address challenges or achieve goals. Strengths may include learned skills, social networks, knowledge, or abilities.

**gift:** abilities that people are born with and/or may develop through time. Gifts do not have to be taught, but they may be shared through creative expression and communication.

**skill:** talents acquired in everyday life, such as cooking or repair.

These definitions are all adapted from Nurture Development's glossary, a strategic partner of the ABCD Institute of DePaul University. Facilitators may reference these and other definitions at:

<https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/glossary/>

### Part 1: Introduction [15 mins.]

- Introduce the community of participants to one another through the “Name Game” ice-breaker activity.

The Name Game asks participants to introduce themselves and begin to engage with the concepts of the lesson. Facilitators should ask participants to say their name, pronouns, and one strength they believe they possess as an individual. Furthermore, facilitators should invite each participant to present a choreographed move associated with their self-identified strength. By asking participants to self-identify their strengths to the group, the lesson facilitator directly engages the ABCD values of focusing on community assets and strengths; centers people, residents, and the community in finding solutions; and develops a theme of empowerment at the individual scale.

- Ask and solicit participant responses to a check-in question and offer a lesson overview.

Next, solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: “If you could give one gift to every single child/person in the world, what gift would you give?” Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

Low-stakes questions such as these are designed in ways that introduce subsequent lesson themes while simultaneously continuing to facilitate group connections. They are also key ways through which participants learn the value of sharing perspectives with the community of which they are a part.

The Check-In Question is also a chance for facilitators to introduce participants to other ABCD approaches and values which will be addressed within the context of the lesson. For younger groups of participants, it may be enough to follow this Check-In question by introducing the concept of gift (as described above). However, facilitators should always be prepared to engage with groups of participants who are more prepared to learn about multiple, related concepts.

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

- Co-create group agreements.

The final portion of the lesson introduction involves the co-creation of group agreements, loosely defined as the rules and guidelines through which the community of participants will self-regulate. Group agreements are a critical way through which facilitators can directly develop in participants an awareness of the value of ABCD practices and values in applied spaces. Through self-generating and co-creating rules by which they operate in this and subsequent lessons, the group shares power and responsibility for their community, engages in collaborative discussion and active listening, and is empowered to create the type of learning space within which individual members of the community may thrive.

To initiate the process of co-creating group agreements, facilitators should introduce the idea of the participants as being part of a community that operates through shared agreements, or rules, that the participants themselves formulate, discuss, agree upon, and adhere to while engaged in the lesson plan. Facilitators will then initiate and guide participants in this process.

There are many ways this guidance may be accomplished, but any method through which co-creation of group agreements occur should have three components: (1) an idea-generation phase, where agreements are proposed; (2) a discussion phase, where proposed agreements are refined; and (3) a voting phase, where proposed agreements are adopted (or rejected) through democratic consensus. For example, facilitators may wish to solicit 'pop-corn' responses, where individual participants volunteer to share a proposed agreement that then gets written on the whiteboard (1). When enough contributions are recorded, the facilitator will solicit any feedback from participants about the wording, intent, or meaning behind any of the proposed agreements (2), and, finally, guide a vote for each proposed agreement (3).

Examples of co-created group agreements may include the following:

"We listen to each other/stay on topic."

"It's okay to disagree, it is NOT okay to shame, blame, or attack."

"Respect one another."

"One person speaking at a time."

Facilitators should write these agreements in a prominent place, where everyone can view them and where they may be referred to at the beginning of each lesson or as needed. Facilitators should emphasize that group agreements may be modified, added to, or revised as the community sees fit. If this occurs, however, facilitators should be prepared to add or modify group agreements through the same process and method through which they were created.

## Part 2: The Head, Hands, Heart exercise [20 minutes]

- Explain the gifts and strengths of the Head, Hands, & Heart for each person by recording definitions and examples on the whiteboard.

The Head, Hands, & Heart model is an ABCD framework through which the concepts of individual strengths and skills are identified, defined, and explored by participants. However, these individual strengths and skills are made relevant to communities through the act of sharing with loved ones and other community members.

Each component of the model (Head, Hands, and Heart) identifies a different strength or skill.

**Head** - Things I know something about and would enjoy talking about with others. Examples may include art, history, birds, or vegetables.

**Hands** - Things or skills I know how to do and would like to share with others. Examples may include braiding, drawing, sports, or cooking.

**Heart** - Things I care deeply about and would like to share with others. Examples may include pets, protecting the environment, volunteering, or scooping snow for your neighbor.

Facilitators may wish to introduce advanced participant groups to two additional components of the Head, Hands, and Heart model, the Heel and Human Connection:

**Heel** - Things I do to help me stay grounded and would like to share with others. Examples include meditation, walking, breathing exercises, and spending time with friends/loved ones.

**Human Connection** - Things I do to stay connected to my community and want to share with others. Examples include participation in an interest group, visiting someone, or introducing someone I know to someone else with a similar interest.

To encourage participants to engage with the Head, Hands, & Heart model, facilitators should define the concepts, offer illustrative examples (for example, the facilitator may wish to share a skill of a well-known celebrity, or offer their own, personal skills), and solicit volunteered responses from participants.

Introducing the Head, Hands, & Heart model to participants through definitions and discussions of examples sets the stage for the final part of Lesson One, where participants reflect on what they have learned and apply their understanding of what they have learned in a creative activity.



### Part 3: Creative Expression of Personal Head, Hands, & Heart Gifts [40 minutes]

- Distribute art materials to participants.

The time during which facilitators distribute art materials to participants is an appropriate time to explain the final part of the lesson. In this final portion, participants will apply what they have learned about individual strengths, gifts, and assets as classified by the Head, Hands, & Heart model.

- Invite participants to creatively express their Head, Hands, & Heart gifts.

Facilitators should invite participants to creatively express their own Head, Hands, and Heart assets. To do so, they may choose to share a pre-made example of their own, or discuss with the group ways that creative expression of participants' Heads, Hand, and Heart expression may occur. This is a deliberately open invitation, and participants are not limited to any single form of expression. They may draw, write, or otherwise express their understanding of personal assets. The flexibility in expression is reflective of ABCD values of honoring diverse personal practices and learning styles, embracing the plural way storytelling occurs in diverse communities, and helps cultivate a welcoming community.

No matter the way the activity is introduced, facilitators should plan to allow time for participants to create their own expression. This time also offers opportunities for facilitators to circulate the learning space to clarify questions, engage with participants to spark their thinking, and/or offer guidance on participants' development of their expression. For younger audiences, it may be necessary for facilitators to identify the time increments by which each part (e.g., Head, Heart, Hands) of the expression should be completed.

- Invite participants to share their creative expressions with other members of the community.

Facilitators should evaluate when participants seem to be nearing completion of their projects. When it seems the group is finishing their work, facilitators should invite participants to share their creative expressions with a partner. In our experiences, the amount of time participants need to share their expressions can range from 5 – 10 minutes. Time permitting, facilitators may wish to solicit volunteers who wish to share their creative expressions with the entire group.

- Conclude the lesson with a “Check-Out Question” and an optional group photograph.

## Lesson Plan 2: Introducing Community Strengths through Neighborhood Walking Tours

**Lesson 2 Objective:** In this lesson, participants gain an understanding of the concept of community assets, defined here as the unique features and resources of a community that might be mobilized in positive community change.

## Description of Lesson:

This tripartite lesson introduces participants to the concept of community assets. Part 1 is a discussion-based introduction, which uses ice-breaker activities and an opportunity for participants to collaboratively review and refine the group agreements established in Lesson 1. This brief introduction offers a thematic link to the previous lesson and emphasizes ABCD values of cultivating community conversations and promoting mutual respect for others' perceptions. Part 2 introduces core concepts necessary to grounding the walking tour in ABCD values, including an introduction and review of the concept of community assets and the five senses necessary to identify and observe community assets while engaging in the third part of the activity. Part 3 is a walking tour of their local neighborhood, where participants apply what they've learned to identify and reflect on potential assets within their community.

## Time Allotment:

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

## Materials:

Because this lesson works with the same participants as the previous lesson, it is expected that participants have access to the art supplies and drawing materials provided in lesson 1. However, facilitators should prepare to have extra art supplies on hand.

In addition to the materials above, facilitators should acquire and provide the following materials:

- A clipboard for each participant.
- A folder for each participant.
- Blank paper.
- Chairs and tables sufficient for the total number of participants.
- Whiteboard.

## Lesson Sequence

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 2. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

## Facilitator Preparation:

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

- Arrange the whiteboard so all participants can see it. Record the group agreements that were proposed and implemented during the previous lesson on the whiteboard.

Recording the participants' group agreements – or agreements, rules, and expectations by which participants will conduct themselves during the activity – is a visual reminder of the previous lesson. The presentation of these agreements also reinforces the ABCD values of understanding sources of power and responsibility within a community as produced out of shared, collaborative efforts; demonstrates that the facilitator and participants honor their previous commitments to the community; and will offer an opportunity for the collaborative revision of group agreements during the introductory portion of the lesson plan (See below).

## Part 1: Introduction [15 minutes]

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "What animal represents your mood today?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

This specific Check-In Question offers facilitators the opportunity to evaluate the group's overall mood. For example, if multiple participants respond in ways describing fatigue or a lack of enthusiasm, facilitators may wish to adjust the lesson so that it involves more activity.

This specific Check-In Question also enables participants to share a story. Storytelling is a demonstrated way to build camaraderie and a sense of community among group members who may come from diverse backgrounds. Because this is the second lesson of a series of lessons, this is a time when facilitators may find new members joining – or, at the very least, still need to develop a sense of community within the group. For a fuller discussion of practical ways to develop a sense of community within a group of disparate individuals, see the following .pdf document (Specifically 'Milestone 3'): [Creating Welcoming Places](#).

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

Because this lesson involves a walking tour, facilitators should ensure participants are ready and able to engage in the walking activity. Ensure participants have proper footwear and clothing, water (as deemed necessary), and phones with any necessary emergency contact information.

- Review the group agreements. Edit, add, or remove group agreements as needed based on participant responses.

Facilitators should offer a space for participants to reflect on, review, and discuss the group agreements established in Lesson One. To do so, briefly describe why the group agreements are an important way through which participants can empower themselves and others through collaborative action (see Lesson One, item 6 in the Lesson Sequence for a fuller discussion). By revisiting group agreements and soliciting participant collaboration in their revision, facilitators also underscore lesson continuity.

During this time, facilitators may also wish to cover key concepts introduced in the first lesson. At a minimum, facilitators should review the idea of asset or strength, as this is the major concept developed in the subsequent part of the lesson.

## **Part 2: Introducing community assets and reviewing the five senses [20 minutes]**

- Explain neighborhood and community assets.

Facilitators should use the whiteboard and an open discussion with participants to introduce the concept of neighborhood and/or community assets. Community assets are briefly defined as "the unique features and resources of a community which might be mobilized in positive community change" (See the definition, below). Facilitators should clearly state and/or write this basic definition out to introduce the concept, then prepare to facilitate an expanded discussion of the concept and/or solicit examples from the participants.

To facilitate this discussion, facilitators may draw parallels with individual assets, which were one of the core concepts covered in Lesson 1. Although participants may offer definitions of community assets unprompted, facilitators should also be prepared to respond to any participants who may offer an example of a community asset in lieu of a formal definition by connecting their example to a particular type of community asset. For an expanded discussion of community assets and each type of asset, see the definition below.

**Community Asset** - the unique features and resources of a community that might be mobilized in positive community change. In ABCD perspectives, communities possess six related types of assets: individual assets, association assets, institutions, physical assets, exchange assets, and cultural assets. A fuller discussion of these six assets and examples of each are available as a .pdf document here: [Foundational Assets](#).

**Individual Assets** – Defined as the gifts of community residents. Every person has gifts to offer, such as skills, talents, cares, concerns, and passions. In community development, you cannot build or create change with people’s needs, only their assets.

**Associations** - Small informal groups of people, who gather and connect around a common interest. Most of the work of associations is done by unpaid members who create the vision and produce the outcomes.

**Institutions** - Formally structured groups of people, made up of paid individuals and groups who are generally professionals with specialized skills and expertise. ABCD perspectives recognize three major types of institutions: For-Profit, Not-For-Profit, and Governmental.

**Physical Assets** - Spaces, places, and things within the community. Physical assets include natural and human components.

**Exchange Assets** - Local community exchanges of gifts and any form of productive labor, including formal (paid, monitored, and regulated by institutions, and taxed by government institutions) and informal (often unpaid, not monitored, regulated, or taxed by institutions) components of economic production. Exchange assets include economic activities such as buying, selling, sharing, trading, and bartering.

**Culture** - Practices, stories, values, traditions, and events that bring people together within a community.

- Review the five senses (hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling, and seeing).

Facilitators should ask participants to recall their five senses and offer examples of each. When participants complete this brief discussion, facilitators should bring attention to the idea that their senses are tools of observation, and that careful awareness of, and reflection on, what their senses observe will help them better identify potential community assets in the walking tour, which constitutes the final part of the lesson.

### **Part 3: Finding Community Assets in a Neighborhood Walking Tour [55 minutes]**

- Introduce the walking tour and identify the route and the tour’s objectives.

Next, the facilitator should introduce to participants that they will conduct a walking tour through a local neighborhood, during which they will be asked to observe (using their senses) and record (by way of notes or drawing) community assets.

To conduct a walking tour, facilitators should prepare and identify (then communicate) a walking route ahead of time. At a minimum, facilitators should identify 2-3 ‘stops’ or places to visit along the tour route. These places should be those that clearly indicate a given community asset (e.g., a physical feature that draws people to the area, such as a park; a building with historical significance; or a viewshed of a scenic area). These types of pre-determined stops are designed to serve as legible examples of community assets that participants can identify, record, and discuss as a group.

For advanced groups, the facilitator may opt to co-create a walking tour with the group, using collaborative methods paralleling those used in the creation and modification of group agreements.

No matter the way a walking tour route is developed, the facilitator plays a key role as an organizer, a safety coordinator, and a 'mediator' for developing participants' awareness of how the sites and neighborhood features they observe may be viewed as community assets. As the organizer, the facilitator ensures all participants know the route; know the objectives of the tour; and know the time constraints of the tour. They also communicate when and where the tour will conclude for a group discussion. As safety coordinators, facilitators should ensure all participants are conducting themselves in ways that promote and ensure group and individual safety. For example, the facilitator might share their cell phone number as an emergency contact, or identify an established rally point where participants should gather in the event of an emergency. As mediators, facilitators should be prepared to ask dialogic questions to participants to encourage them to think critically about what they are observing and how their observations might inform the identification of a community asset.

- Conduct the walking tour.

Participants may conduct the walking tour individually, in small groups, or as a single, large group. In our experiences, group tours provide better opportunities for participants to share any important observations or other information critical to adding to the group's understanding of local assets.

During the walking tour, facilitators should encourage participants to take time at each stop to observe their surroundings, reflect on how what they observe might be an asset, and record their observations with field notes or drawings. In our experiences, approximately 10 minutes at each stop is sufficient time for participants to observe their surroundings, identify potential assets, and record them.

- Conduct a group meeting at the end of the tour to discuss participants' observations.

At the conclusion of the walking tour, facilitators should solicit participants' discussion of what they observed during the walking tour. At a minimum, facilitators should ask participants to identify one person, place, or thing to recall from the tour that they believed to be an asset they identified during the tour. Time permitting, all participants should contribute to this discussion. If responses or recalling parts of the tour are not forthcoming, the facilitator can guide a group reflection that identifies reasons why there are challenges and/or difficulties in recalling details. No matter the types of responses received, facilitators should demonstrate to participants that their observations are important through recording them in a visible place (e.g., a whiteboard).

- Conclude the lesson by asking a final check-out question.

After all participants have offered their observations via group discussions, facilitators may use any remaining time to organize an optional group photograph.

To conclude the lesson, facilitators should ask the following check-out question: "What is one strength of your community and neighborhood that you identified today?"

## Lesson Plan 3: Introducing Community Strengths through Neighborhood Walking Tours

**Lesson 3 Objective:** In this lesson, participants learn to practice learning conversations, loosely defined as exploratory interviews designed to identify another person's strengths.

### Description of Lesson:

In this three-part lesson, participants will engage in a learning conversations exercise to practice their interview skills. In Part 1, participants create continuity with the previous lessons through revisions of group agreements and a reflection on core concepts of community and individual assets. In Part 2, participants learn the concept of a learning conversation and its characteristics and identify ways learning conversations reveal individual values and assets. During Part 2 participants will also apply their understanding of learning conversations by conducting interviews using the Learning Conversation Guide template. Each participant will take turns assuming the roles of both the interviewer and the interviewee. Following the interviews, in Part 3, the group will collaborate to compile a list of the strengths they have discovered. Following this collaborative discussion, participants will create drawings depicting the mentioned strengths during the group sharing.

### Time Allotment:

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

### Materials:

Because this lesson works with the same participants as the previous lesson, it is expected that participants have access to the art supplies and drawing materials provided in lessons 1 and 2. However, facilitators should prepare to have extra art supplies on hand.

In addition to the materials above, facilitators should acquire and provide the following materials:

- A clipboard for each participant.
- A folder for each participant.
- Blank paper.
- A roll of oversized white paper.
- Tape.
- Chairs and tables sufficient for the total number of participants.
- 4 additional tables.

- Whiteboard.
- Printed copies of the [“Learning Conversation Guide” worksheet](#), are sufficient for the total number of participants.

## Lesson Sequence

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 3. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

### Facilitator Preparation:

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

- Place the 4 additional tables for the final part of the lesson, which is a group drawing activity. Roll out oversized paper across these tables and tape it down.

The precise arrangement of these tables is dependent on the space available to the facilitator. Ideally, they are placed in a location that will not interfere with Parts 1 or 2 of the lesson. If possible, they should be placed in a way that allows participants to approach them from any direction. This optimizes the ability of participants to contribute to the group drawing activity.

- Arrange the whiteboard so all participants can see it. Record the group agreements that were proposed, revised, and implemented during the previous lesson on the whiteboard.

Recording the participants’ group agreements – or agreements, rules, and expectations by which participants will conduct themselves during the activity – is a visual reminder of the previous lesson. The presentation of these agreements also reinforces the ABCD values of understanding sources of power and responsibility within a community as produced out of shared, collaborative efforts; demonstrates that the facilitator and participants honor their previous commitments to the community; and will offer an opportunity for the collaborative revision of group agreements during the introductory portion of the lesson plan.



## Part 1: Introduction [15 minutes]

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "What talent or skill do you wish you had?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

This specific Check-In Question offers facilitators the opportunity to remind participants of the concept of individual assets, first introduced in Lesson 1. This is a chance for facilitators to create a sense of continuity between this lesson and the previous lessons that the participants have already completed. For example, facilitators may ask this question using the language of ABCD frameworks (e.g., substitute the ABCD term "asset" for "skill"), or ask participants to recall some of the strengths and assets their peers self-identified in Lesson 1.

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

Finally, facilitators should encourage participants to review the group agreements and ask participants whether they perceive a need to modify or add to these agreements. Should they feel the need to do so, facilitators could adopt the same revision processes identified in Lessons 1 and 2.

## Part 2: Introducing and Practicing Learning Conversations [30 minutes]

- Introduce the concept of the Learning Conversation.

Facilitators should introduce the core concept of the lesson: the learning conversation. In ABCD frameworks, learning conversations are a technique and set of practices designed to identify the gifts of persons in the conversation. In articulating those gifts as responses to questions, those involved in learning conversations are better able to recognize what their gifts are, how their gifts are related to personal passion, and how they might use or share their gifts in collaborative processes leading to positive community change. Fundamentally, learning conversations are ways to empower community members by enabling an awareness of their agency to act. Through using self-identified passions, assets, and action plans, those who participate in learning conversations are better able to pursue collaborative actions in pursuing community change.

Although there are many ways to conduct learning conversations, all learning conversations have questions and content designed to develop the following foci and objectives:

**Build trust** – trust is foundational to the development of relationships necessary for collaboration.

**Identify gifts and passions** – In ABCD frameworks, gifts (or assets) are related to passions because they are emergent from passions. In other words, passions are the motivating values which drive the development of gifts at individual and community scales.

**Explore mutual interests** – Exploring (identifying, discussing, reflecting on) mutual interests is the first step towards developing possible plans of action towards community change.

A fuller discussion of learning conversations are available as a .pdf file here: [ABCD Toolkit - Learning Conversations](#). An additional resource facilitators may wish to review prior to the lesson to gain a stronger foundation in a full range of gifts and passions is available as a .pdf file here: [Gifts and Assets that People Who are Vulnerable Commonly Bring to Community](#).

- Practice Learning Conversations in partnered groups.

Facilitators should break the participants into self-selected or assigned pairs. To help guide participants, facilitators should hand out interview questions (two copies for each group of two), and any as-needed materials (e.g., clipboards, writing implements). Explain that in learning conversations, interviewers (or reporters) will use the question handout as a guide during their interview. Following the completion of one interview, participants will swap roles, so that the person who conducted the interview now has a chance to be an interviewee.

Each participant will be a reporter or interviewee for 5-7 minutes. In our experience, this was an appropriate amount of time for participants to ask (and respond to) all the questions on the worksheet. Facilitators should remind participants when it is time to switch.

- Lead a group discussion reflecting on the learning conversation process.

To initiate the group discussion, facilitators can ask the following Check-In questions: “What is one thing you learned about your partner from your conversation? What are some of their strengths?” Time permitting, each participant can offer one thing they learned about their partner during the interview process. Alternatively, the facilitator may solicit selected volunteer responses.

As participants respond, the facilitator (or a designated participant) should record responses on the whiteboard. Explain that these responses will serve as inspiration for the final part of the lesson, where participants will collaboratively draw the strengths of their peers.

### **Part 3: Drawing Strengths as a Group [45 minutes]**

- Direct participants to gather around the four tables set aside for the collaborative drawing activity (see the above section for details on these tables’ arrangement and set-up).

Once gathered around the table, facilitators should now explain that participants will visually represent the strengths of their peers that they identified and discussed in Part 2. Instruct participants to use their personal art supplies to draw their peers’ strengths on the paper. This task is left deliberately open-ended, so that participants can express themselves freely. It is also an opportunity for facilitators to solicit discussion about the community, concepts covered in the lesson, or individual assets and strengths through conversation and other forms of creative expression.

- Conclude the lesson with a check-out question and optional group photograph.

Facilitators should solicit participants' volunteered responses to the following check-out question:

“Do you feel comfortable having a learning conversation with a family member or friend? If so, who would you ask?” This question is designed to encourage participants to apply the practice of learning conversation outside of the curriculum in new contexts.

## Lesson Plan 4: Documenting Neighborhood Assets through a Photo Walk

**Lesson 4 Objective:** In this lesson, participants explore the local community through a walking tour and document their observations of the community through photography. They then upload these photographs to a shared digital repository for use in subsequent lessons.

### Description of Lesson:

This two-part lesson consists of an introduction and walking tour, during which participants will photograph community assets of their local neighborhood. Part 1 is a discussion-based introduction, which uses ice-breaker activities and an opportunity for participants to collaboratively review and refine the group agreements established in Lesson 1. This brief introduction offers a thematic link to the previous lesson and emphasizes ABCD values of cultivating community conversations and promoting mutual respect for others' perceptions. Part 3 is a walking tour of their local neighborhood, where participants seek out and photograph community assets as a form of data collection for subsequent lessons in the curriculum.

### Time Allotment:

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

### Materials:

This lesson requires minimal materials. Because its primary activity is a walking tour where participants will take photographs, ensure participants all have access to a device (phone, tablet, or camera) that can take pictures. Phones with cameras are now ubiquitous. However, if a participant does not possess one, facilitators may wish to pair them up with a partner who possesses one. Alternatively, facilitators can provide drawing materials for those participants who do not have a phone.

Facilitators need to have access to a laptop with an internet connection, along with assorted USB and micro-USB connections. If possible, facilitators should also possess an SD card reader. These materials may be acquired at any electronics or big-box store (e.g., Walmart or Target) for under \$15 dollars. Acquiring these materials ensures the facilitator is prepared for participants to share their photographs in a common digital space (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox), even if the facility within which the lessons take place lack an internet connection.

Facilitators should also ensure all participants are ready and able to conduct a walking tour. Ensure participants have proper footwear and clothing, water (as deemed necessary), and phones with any necessary emergency contact information.

## Lesson Sequence

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 4. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

### Facilitator Preparation:

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- Create a Dropbox or Google Drive account for the participants.

This digital space should be prepared in advance so that participants can transfer photographs from their private devices to a shared space.

If no Wifi or internet connection is available, participants can share their photographs after the lesson is concluded, or the facilitator may use appropriate USB connections and/or SD card readers to transfer files from one electronic device to another.

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

### Part 1: Introduction [20 minutes]

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "If you could be a character from any book or movie, who would you be?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

This specific Check-In Question offers facilitators the opportunity to remind participants of the concept of individual assets, first introduced in Lesson 1. This is a chance for facilitators to create a sense of continuity between this lesson and the previous lessons that the participants have already completed. For example, facilitators may ask this question using the language of ABCD frameworks (e.g., adapt the question so it asks for participants to identify the assets or skills of their chosen character), or ask participants to identify potential assets of their chosen character – or, to encourage mutual respect and listening, ask participants to identify potential assets or skills of the characters their peers have chosen.

Next, the facilitator should introduce to participants that they will conduct a walking tour through a local neighborhood, during which they will be asked to observe (using their senses) and record (by way of photographs) community assets. Encourage participants to capture photos that excite them, concern them, or represent the strengths of the neighborhood.

To conduct a walking tour, facilitators should prepare and identify (then communicate) a walking route ahead of time. At a minimum, facilitators should identify 2-3 ‘stops’ or places to visit along the tour route. These places should be those that clearly indicate a given community asset (e.g., a physical feature that draws people to the area, such as a park; a building with historical significance; or a viewshed of a scenic area). These types of pre-determined stops are designed to serve as legible examples of community assets that participants can identify, photograph, and discuss as a group when necessary. If facilitators choose to develop and implement a pre-determined route, then they can choose to add historical contexts or other information at each stop.

For advanced groups, the facilitator may opt to co-create a walking tour with the group, using collaborative methods paralleling those used in the creation and modification of group agreements.

No matter the way a walking tour route is developed, the facilitator plays a key role as an organizer, a safety coordinator, and as a ‘mediator’ for developing participants’ awareness of how the sites and neighborhood features they observe may be viewed as community assets. As the organizer, the facilitator ensures all participants know the route; know the objectives of the tour; and know the time constraints of the tour. They also communicate when and where the tour will conclude, so that participants may upload their photographs to a shared digital space. As safety coordinators, facilitators should ensure all participants are conducting themselves in ways that promote and ensure group and individual safety. For example, the facilitator might share their cell phone number as an emergency contact, or identify an established rally point where participants should gather in the event of an emergency.

Finally, facilitators should encourage participants to review the group agreements and ask participants whether they perceive a need to modify or add to these agreements. Should they feel the need to do so, facilitators could adopt the same revision processes identified in Lessons 1, 2, and 3.

## **Part 2: Conducting the walking tour and gather photographs in a shared digital space [70 minutes]**

- Conduct the walking tour.

Participants may conduct the walking tour individually, in small groups, or as a single, large group. In our experiences, group tours provide better opportunities for participants to share any important observations or other information critical to adding to the group's understanding of local assets.

During the walking tour, facilitators should encourage participants to take time at each stop to observe their surroundings, reflect on how what they observe might be an asset, and record their observations with photographs. In our experiences, approximately 10 minutes at each stop is sufficient time for participants to observe their surroundings, identify potential assets, and record them.

- Conduct a group meeting at the end of the tour so participants have an opportunity to upload their photographs to a shared digital space and discuss participants' observations.

At the conclusion of the walking tour, facilitators should gather participants so they have an opportunity to upload their chosen photographs to a shared digital space. Facilitators should anticipate working with participants individually in the event there are technology-related issues with uploading photographs. Facilitators should encourage other participants to aid their peers as needed.

Finally, facilitators should solicit participants' discussion of what they observed during the walking tour. At a minimum, facilitators should ask participants to identify one person, place, or thing to recall from the tour that they believed to be an asset they identified during the tour. Time permitting, all participants should contribute to this discussion. If responses or recalling parts of the tour are not forthcoming, the facilitator can guide a group reflection that identifies reasons why there are challenges and/or difficulties in recalling details.

No matter the types of responses received, facilitators should demonstrate to participants that their observations are important through recording them in a visible place (e.g., a whiteboard).

- Conclude the lesson by asking a final check-out question and an optional group photograph.

Facilitators should solicit participants' volunteered responses to the following check-out question: "What is the place you most valued visiting during the walking tour?" This question offers opportunities for participants to reflect on the locations they photographed – and by asking participants to ground their response in values, facilitators encourage participants to reflect on their experience of the neighborhood and evaluate its assets.

## **Lesson Plan 5: Discussing Neighborhood Photos to Add Context to Community Assets**

**Lesson 5 Objective:** In this lesson, participants gain an understanding of local history and culture as a form of community asset. They begin the process of visualizing community assets through making individual collages.

## Description of Lesson:

In this three-part lesson, participants will gain an understanding of local history and culture as a form of community asset, and begin a longer process of using art to visualize community assets by beginning the production of individualized collages. Part 1 consists of an icebreaker activity and introduces the lesson. Part 2 consists of a facilitator-led discussion of the neighborhood photographs (gathered in Lesson 4) to draw out participants' awareness of how local history and culture have shaped the community. Part 3 introduces collages as a form of artistic expression and allows participants to begin developing their own collages visualizing community assets.

## Time Allotment:

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

## Materials:

Because this lesson works with the same participants as the previous lesson, it is expected that participants have access to the art supplies and drawing materials provided in lessons 1 - 3. However, facilitators should prepare to have extra art supplies on hand.

In addition to the materials above, facilitators should acquire and provide the following materials:

- Printed photographs of the neighborhood, gathered during Lesson 4. Facilitators should print multiple (3-5) copies of each photograph.
- Scissors (one pair per participant).
- Glue sticks, glue, and other adhesives.
- Assorted magazines, brochures, maps, and images for collage materials. Facilitators may acquire a wide range of magazines at little to no cost from yard and garage sales, public libraries, universities, colleagues and family, or even offices. Brochures and maps for local neighborhoods are available at park visitor centers, tourism offices, historical societies, heritage centers, and chambers of commerce. In large communities, there may be city maps or tourist maps available at city government offices.
- 8.5 in. by 11 in. heavy paper stock (e.g., construction paper) or blank cardboard, to serve as backdrops and/or materials for participants' collages. Larger sizes are also appropriate.
- Whiteboard.
- Dry Erase Markers.

- (optional) Local history resources. These may include books, historical photographs, websites, or newspaper articles, among other sources. Facilitators can gather hard copies of these materials by contacting local historical societies, public libraries, heritage centers, or university collections. Digital files may be available on state Historical Society web pages, Library of Congress web search tools, and/or the Newspapers of America database.

## Lesson Sequence

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 4. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

## Facilitator Preparation:

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- (optional) Make a collage as an illustrative example for Part 3 of the lesson.

Collages are forms of artistic expression that use pieces of other media and/or objects to convey a new, emergent theme. In Part 3 of the lesson, participants will begin constructing a collage visualizing their neighborhood. Facilitators may wish to create a sample piece to illustrate the concept of collage, depending on the learning needs of the participants.

- If the facilitator is providing local history resources (see the Materials list above), then the facilitator should plan to review the materials they plan to provide.

Reviewing these resources enables facilitators to aid participants in seeking out historical knowledge about their own neighborhoods through participant-led reference to these materials. Therefore, this review need not be exhaustive, and the facilitator is not expected to have a complete understanding of any given source's content (or the history of the neighborhood!).

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.



## Part 1: Introduction [15 mins.]

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "What are you looking forward to learning about this year?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

Finally, facilitators should encourage participants to review the group agreements and ask participants whether they perceive a need to modify or add to these agreements. Should they feel the need to do so, facilitators could adopt the same revision processes identified in Lessons 1 and 2.

## Part 2: Reviewing Neighborhood Photos & Discussion of Their Significance [30 minutes]

- Distribute neighborhood photographs and engage participants in a discussion of the neighborhood photographs.

In Lesson 4, participants took pictures of their local community to visualize community assets. Facilitators should distribute copies of these photographs among the participants. They may receive copies of their own photographs or copies of photographs taken by their peers. After the photographs are distributed, facilitators should lead a guided discussion soliciting participants' reflections on the photographs.

Facilitators may wish to ask the following questions to engage participants in reflecting on the photographs as visualizations of community assets:

- What patterns did you see during your walk?
- From your photography, what images excite you, and what images concern you?
- What are some strengths in the neighborhood?
- Can you remember some of the history of this neighborhood you learned during this walk?
- [if a participant is reflecting on a photograph taken by a peer] What strengths do you think this photograph represents?

The facilitator may ask all participants to contribute to the conversation, or they may solicit volunteer responses. Alternatively, these discussion questions may be written on a whiteboard so that pairs or small groups of participants may use them as discussion points.

### Part 3: Making Collages to Visualize Neighborhood [45 minutes]

- Introduce the idea of a collage as a form of artistic expression. Explain that participants will use provided materials and photographs to make a collage representing an asset or theme they find relevant to their neighborhood.

Facilitators may find that using a sample collage (see materials list, above) to demonstrate the artistic form is an effective technique to introduce collages. Facilitators should explain that this is the first day for participants to create their collages, and that participants will have more time in Lesson 6 to create their collages.

No matter how the collage is introduced, facilitators should explain that participants will create collages representing their neighborhood. Participants are free to make use of any materials that they see relevant in the creation of their collage, and are encouraged to think creatively. However, facilitators should explain that participants must identify and incorporate the following components into their collage:

- A community asset;
- Reference or use of neighborhood photographs in the collage; and
- Reference to the neighborhood's culture or history as the participant perceives it.

Facilitators should use this time to circulate the room and speak with individual participants. If participants have questions about the neighborhood's history, the facilitator can either provide historical information directly, or they can encourage participants to make use of historical sources (if provided: see Materials section for more information). Enabling participants to reference these sources on their own is one-way participants can empower themselves in their capacities to observe and explore their neighborhood for historical contexts.

- Implement a 5-minute 'peer review' of participants' in-progress collages.

Facilitators can gauge the room to see when / if participants need a break from their collage work. If they do, implement a 5-minute break from collage-making, and ask participants to find a partner to speak with about the progress of their collages. This offers an opportunity for participants to communicate their collage's theme to others early in the process of collage creation.

- Conclude the lesson by asking a final check-out question and an optional group photograph.

Facilitators should solicit participants' volunteered responses to the following check-out question: "How are you feeling as you leave this meeting?"

### Lesson Plan 6: Creating Individual Neighborhood Vision Boards - Photo & Image Collage

**Lesson 6 Objective:** In this lesson, participants continue to work on their collages in preparation for Lesson 7.

**Description of Lesson:**

In this two-part lesson, participants continue to work on their collages as a form of artistic expression. To encourage creative expression and their ability to communicate and engage in mutual respect, participants will have an opportunity to share and discuss their works in progress with peers and the facilitator.

**Time Allotment:**

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

**Materials:**

Because this lesson works with the same participants as the previous lesson, it is expected that participants have access to the art supplies and drawing materials provided in lessons 1 – 3 and lesson 5. However, facilitators should prepare to have extra art supplies on hand.

In addition to the materials above, facilitators should acquire and provide the following materials:

- Printed photographs of the neighborhood, gathered during Lesson 4. Facilitators should print multiple (3-5) copies of each photograph.
- Scissors (one pair per participant).
- Glue sticks, glue, and other adhesives.
- Assorted magazines, brochures, maps, and images for collage materials. Facilitators may acquire a wide range of magazines at little to no cost from yard and garage sales, public libraries, universities, colleagues and family, or even offices. Brochures and maps for local neighborhoods are available at park visitor centers, tourism offices, historical societies, heritage centers, and chambers of commerce. In large communities, there may be city maps or tourist maps available at city government offices.
- 8.5 in. by 11 in. heavy paper stock (e.g., construction paper) or blank cardboard, to serve as backdrops and/or materials for participants' collages. Larger sizes are also appropriate.
- Whiteboard.
- Dry Erase Markers.

- Local history resources. These may include books, historical photographs, websites, or newspaper articles, among other sources. Facilitators can gather hard copies of these materials by contacting local historical societies, public libraries, heritage centers, or university collections. Digital files may be available on state Historical Society web pages, Library of Congress web search tools, and/or the Newspapers of America database.

## Lesson Sequence

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 4. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

## Facilitator Preparation:

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- If the facilitator is providing local history resources (see the Materials list above), then the facilitator should plan to review the materials they plan to provide.

Reviewing these resources enables facilitators to aid participants in seeking out historical knowledge about their own neighborhoods through participant-led reference to these materials. Therefore, this review need not be exhaustive, and the facilitator is not expected to have a complete understanding of any given source's content (or the history of the neighborhood!).

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

## Part 1: Introduction [15 mins.]

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "What is the most memorable thing that happened to you this past week?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

Finally, facilitators should encourage participants to review the group agreements and ask participants whether they perceive a need to modify or add to these agreements. Should they feel the need to do so, facilitators could adopt the same revision processes identified in Lessons 1 and 2.

## Part 2: Individual Collage Completion [75 minutes]

- In Part 2, participants are encouraged to continue working on their collages, with the goal of completing their individual collages.

Facilitators should use this time to circulate the room and speak with individual participants. If participants have questions about the neighborhood's history, the facilitator can either provide historical information directly, or they can encourage participants to make use of historical sources (if provided: see Materials section for more information). Enabling participants to reference these sources on their own is one-way participants can empower themselves in their capacities to observe and explore their neighborhood for historical contexts.

- Implement a 10-minute 'peer review' of participants' in-progress collages.

Facilitators can gauge the room to see when / if participants need a break from their collage work. If they do, implement a 10-minute break from collage-making, and ask participants to find a partner to speak with about the progress of their collages. This offers an opportunity for participants to communicate their collage's theme to others early in the process of collage creation.

- Conclude the lesson by asking a final check-out question and an optional group photograph.

Facilitators should solicit participants' volunteered responses to the following check-out question: "What is one thing you learned about the neighborhood you want to represent in your collage?"

## Lesson Plan 7: Creating a Collective Vision for the Neighborhood

**Lesson 7 Objective:** In this lesson, participants will share their individual collages (which represent a personal vision for the community) and collaborate with their peers to create a collective vision for their community, which they then collaboratively express in art.

### Description of Lesson:

In this three-part lesson, participants will share their collages with the group. After an introduction (Part 1), participants will reflect on the patterns or themes they observed in other's art and compile a list of those findings (Part 2). In Part 3, the participants will work together to create a collaborative drawing on a large piece of paper. This drawing will reflect on the patterns or themes that they have noticed in each other's art.

### **Time Allotment:**

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

### **Materials:**

Because this lesson works with the same participants as the previous lesson, it is expected that participants have access to the art supplies and drawing materials provided in lessons 1 - 3. However, facilitators should prepare to have extra art supplies on hand.

In addition to the materials above, facilitators should acquire and provide the following materials:

- Printed photographs of the neighborhood, gathered during Lesson 4. Facilitators should print multiple (3-5) copies of each photograph.
- Scissors (one pair per participant).
- Glue sticks, glue, and other adhesives.
- Assorted magazines, brochures, maps, and images for art materials.
- Heavy paper stock (e.g., construction paper) or blank cardboard, to serve as materials for participants' collective art project.
- Whiteboard.
- Dry Erase Markers.
- (optional) Local history resources.
- A roll of oversized white paper.
- Tape.
- Chairs and tables sufficient for the total number of participants.
- 4 additional tables.

### **Lesson Sequence**

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 3. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

## Facilitator Preparation:

Prior to the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

- Place the 4 additional tables for the final part of the lesson, which is a group drawing activity. Roll out oversized paper across these tables and tape it down.

The precise arrangement of these tables is dependent on the space available to the facilitator. Ideally, they are placed in a location that will not interfere with Parts 1 or 2 of the lesson. If possible, they should be placed in a way that allows participants to approach them from any direction. This optimizes the ability of participants to contribute to the group drawing activity.

## Part 1: Introduction [15 minutes]

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "What color represents your mood today, and why?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

Finally, facilitators should encourage participants to review the group agreements and ask participants whether they perceive a need to modify or add to these agreements. Should they feel the need to do so, facilitators could adopt the same revision processes identified in Lessons 1 and 2.

## Part 2: Sharing and Reflecting on Individual Collages [30 minutes]

- Ask each participant to share the major themes of their individual collage with the group.

There are many ways for participants to share their collages. The facilitator can help guide participants by asking them to respond to the following questions:

- a) How does your collage represent the community as it is now or in the past? and
- b) What would you change about your community for the future?

- Ask participants to place their collages on their chairs for a ‘reflective gallery walk’ of their peers’ work that identifies common patterns and themes.

The facilitator should explain that participants will now review each other’s work for common patterns and themes. Patterns are loosely defined here as a thing that repeats in a predictable way, while themes are loosely defined as an important idea that is woven throughout a story or work of art. Request that participants quietly review their peers’ works for common patterns and themes, taking notes as needed. In our experiences, 5 – 10 minutes is sufficient time for participants to reflect on all their peers’ work.

- Invite participants to share the themes and patterns they identified, and record these themes on a whiteboard visible to all.

### **Part 3: Collective Drawing of Our Community [45 minutes]**

- Direct participants to gather around the four tables set aside for the collaborative drawing activity (see the above section for details on these tables’ arrangement and set-up).

Once gathered around the table, facilitators should now explain that participants will visually represent the common patterns and themes they identified and discussed in Part 2. Instruct participants to use their personal art supplies to draw these themes and patterns on the paper. This task is left deliberately open-ended, so that participants can express themselves freely. It is also an opportunity for facilitators to solicit discussion about the community, concepts covered in the lesson, or neighborhood assets and strengths through conversation and other forms of creative expression.

- Conclude the lesson by asking a final check-out question and an optional group photograph.

Facilitators should solicit participants’ volunteered responses to the following check-out question: “What is one word that represents your local community to you?”

## **Lesson Plan 8: Celebrating the Achievements and Visions of a Community**

**Lesson 8 Objective:** In this lesson, participants reflect on and celebrate their completion of the curriculum. They also share their visualizations of their local neighborhood with visitors.

### **Description of Lesson:**

This two-part lesson is part reflective activity and part celebration. After a group discussion of their achievements and insights gained during their completion of the curriculum, participants then celebrate their visualizations (individual and collective) with members of the community over food. During this public portion of the lesson, participants are recognized for their achievement by visitors, their peers, and the facilitator.



### **Time Allotment:**

This lesson is designed to be completed in approximately 90 minutes.

### **Materials:**

Because this lesson works with the same participants as the previous lesson, it is expected that participants have access to the art supplies and drawing materials provided in lessons 1 – 7. However, facilitators should prepare to have extra art supplies on hand for visitors to use in Part 2.

- Chairs sufficient for the total number of participants.
- 6 additional tables.
- Refreshments and utensils. These may be provided by the facilitator, a host organization, or solicited as potluck items from the participants.
- A roll of oversized white paper.
- Tape.

### **Lesson Sequence**

In this section, we outline a numbered sequence for implementing Lesson 3. In addition to outlining the basic sequence of implementation, we note moments where the lesson connects to the values and practices of ABCD learning. When necessary, we also identify and define ABCD concepts; and offer examples or samples drawn from our own experiences of offering this lesson. Though these experiences are unique to the Malone community, we hope that offering them here offers guidelines or inspiration for facilitators in other learning contexts.

### **Facilitator Preparation:**

One week before the lesson, the facilitator should:

- Invite guests to a celebratory ‘gallery walk’ that displays the participants’ individual and group work.

The timing of invitations ensures that visitors have a chance to clear their schedules and RSVP. The form of the invitation and the visitors invited may vary from group to group. For example, if most participants are children, then the facilitator should plan to invite parent-guardians and encourage them to invite others who are important to the participants (e.g., teachers, siblings, friends, or other relatives.)

Facilitators may wish to prepare fliers to advertise the event at local community businesses or organizations or advertise the event on social media outlets.

Request an RSVP so the facilitator can have enough refreshments, chairs, etc. for an anticipated number of visitors.

On the day of the lesson, the facilitator should take the following steps:

- Hang or otherwise display each participant's individual collage as well as the collectively produced artwork.

These will provide the 'gallery' for visitors and participants to interact with and comment upon.

- Arrange tables and chairs in a circular shape.

Arranging tables and chairs in a circular shape provides participants with a designated workspace where they can all see and hear each other. This helps establish a learning environment where participants are more likely to practice mutual listening and learning and connect as peers. In contrast to more traditional classroom/workshop layouts (i.e., rows facing the front of a room), a circular layout helps destabilize hierarchical spaces and promotes the workspace as one defined by shared power among participants and the facilitator.

- Place 4 additional tables for the final part of the lesson, which is a group drawing activity. Roll out oversized paper across these tables and tape it down, and provide drawing materials for this paper.

The precise arrangement of these tables is dependent on the space available to the facilitator. Ideally, they are placed in a location that will not interfere with Part 1 of the lesson. If possible, they should be placed in a way that allows participants to approach them from any direction.

- Place 2 additional tables for refreshments, and arrange refreshments accordingly.

### **Part 1: Introduction and Curriculum Reflection [45 minutes]**

- Ask and solicit a response to a Check-In Question and offer an overview of the day's lesson.

Solicit a response to the following Check-In Question: "How are you feeling about beginning your last activity with our group?" Facilitators may ask that each participant share a response with the group, they may solicit volunteer responses, or they may break participants into small groups to reflect on and share their responses with one another.

Next, facilitators should briefly offer an overview of the day's lesson. This overview need not be comprehensive. However, it should clearly identify the general 'shape' of the lesson's activities and identify the key ABCD approaches and values with which participants will engage. Facilitators should also identify the specific activities participants will perform over the course of the lesson.

Finally, facilitators should encourage participants to review the group agreements and ask participants whether they perceive a need to modify or add to these agreements. Should they feel the need to do so, facilitators could adopt the same revision processes identified in Lessons 1 and 2.

- Ask and solicit responses to the following questions:
  - What strengths/gifts have they discovered in themselves and their fellow participants?
  - What strengths/gifts have they discovered in the neighborhood?
  - What dreams do they have for the future of the neighborhood?
- Invite visitors to enter the room and meet with the curriculum's participants in a reflective gallery walk.

As visitors circulate the room and get refreshments, facilitators should encourage participants to share the meanings behind their work and what they learned about their local community while participating in the curriculum. Facilitators can also request gallery visitors reflect on their takeaways from the art and participant sharing and their own dreams for the community. The intention of this circulation and exchange is to open conversations about what community art might look like in their neighborhood (e.g., discussions of the type of art, where it might take place, and how it might be inspired by the curriculum participants' work and values, if applicable).

- Encourage participants and visitors to write notes, draw, or otherwise express their thoughts about the curriculum, art, or ideas for the future of art in their local community on the oversized paper.
- Celebrate each participant and take a group photograph.

As a way of recognizing each participant's contribution to the group, the facilitator should congratulate each participant and ask for a group celebration. There are many ways this could be achieved, and this celebration is deliberately left open-ended to be tailored to the needs and desires of the participants. For example, facilitators could offer a celebration by naming each participant and identifying one of their individual strengths. Alternatively, the group could offer collective applause, or say a slogan (In our experiences, we use the slogan 'Stronger Together' to emphasize the power of collaborative action) after each participant is honored. One final way to celebrate each participant is by asking them a final check-out question, such as "What is one highlight or special memory you have of our time together in this club?"